VERTEBRATE FAUNA OF CANNABULLEN PLATEAU: A MID-ALTITUDE RAINFOREST IN THE AUSTRALIAN WET TROPICS

STEPHEN E. WILLIAMS, KARL VERNES AND JACQUELINE COUGHLAN

Williams, S.E., Vernes, K. & Coughlin, J. 1999 06 30: Vertebrate fauna of Cannabullen Plateau: a mid-altitude rainforest in the Australian wet tropics. *Memoirs of the Queensland Museum* **43**(2): 849-858. Brisbane. ISSN 0079-8835.

This paper reports on a vertebrate fauna survey undertaken at the Cannabullen Section of Tully Gorge National Park in the north Queensland Wet Tropics. A team of 6 biologists surveyed the plateau and adjacent Cochable Creek over 20 days in November 1993 using a combination of standardised methods including mammal trapping, active reptile searches, spotlighting and bird censuses. Additional miscellaneous observations were also included. Nincty-six species of vertebrate were detected (12 mammals, 52 birds, 22 reptiles and 10 amphibians) of which 29 were endemic to the Wet Tropics Region. Thirty-nine species were considered to be significant with respect to the conservation of the World Heritage values of the region, with 8 of these recognised as being rare or endangered in Queensland. The survey extended the known altitudinal range of 6 species endemic to the Wet Tropics to well below their previously recognised limits. *Vertebrate fauna, Cannabullen Plateau, rainforest, survey, Queensland, Australia.*

Stephen E. Williams, (email:stephen.williams@jcu.edu.au), Karl Vernes and Jacqueline Coughlan, Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management, and Department of Zoology and Tropical Ecology, James Cook University, Townsville 4811, Australia: 27 October 1998.

Although reasonable information now exists regarding the regional distributions of most Wet Tropics vertebrates, there is a paucity of detailed local-scale surveys reported in the literature. Only a handful of field studies have published detailed descriptions of the vertebrate assemblages occurring in a specific area within the Wet Tropics (Gill, 1970; Winter et al., 1992; Kutt et al., 1995a,b; Williams et al., 1993; Williams & Marsh, 1998). Instead, most published work has been based on a synthesis of existing information, mainly unpublished, gathered by many researchers over many years (e.g. Kikkawa, 1982; Winter et al., 1984; Winter, 1988; papers in Nix & Switzer, 1991; McDonald, 1992; Covacevich & McDonald, 1993; Werren, 1993; Williams et al., 1996; Williams, 1997; Winter, 1997). Such examinations provide valuable insights, however, most of the primary survey work on which these broad-scale studies are based have concentrated on either the upland rainforests (above 600m) or the lowland coastal rainforest (below 100m). Few studies have been undertaken in the mid-elevation rainforest (200-600m), largely as a consequence of the relative inaccessibility of the forests and the steep terrain in much of this zone (McDonald, 1992; Williams et al., 1996).

In a review on vertebrate distributions and biodiversity in the Wet Tropics, Williams et al. (1996) concluded that one of the most important environmental gradients in the region was altitude, and identified mid-altitudes as being the poorest surveyed areas. The lower altitudinal tolerances of many Wet Tropics species are uncertain due to the lack of distributional data at mid-elevations. Fauna surveys within this altitudinal range are important, since they illuminate the changes occurring across the altitudinal gradient. Many of the regionallyendemic species are upland species and accurate information about their altitudinal limits is crucial when interpreting patterns of biogeography. Furthermore, the altitudinal gradient islinked tightly to the understanding of patterns of biodiversity in the region, especially the influences of historical rainforest contractions during the Pleistocene (Williams, 1997; Williams & Pearson, 1997; Winter, 1997; Williams & Hero, 1998).

More than 70% of rainforest in the Wet Tropics has been altered by logging, with the relatively flat, or gently sloping ground being most affected (Winter et al., 1987). Consequently, most of the regional data on vertebrate distributions originates from forests which have been subjected to selective logging. Selective logging changes the physical structure of the forest (Winter et al., 1987) which in turn influences the composition of the vertebrate community (Pahl et al., 1988; Laurance & Laurance, 1996; Williams & Marsh, 1998; Williams et al., 1996). As most of the undisturbed rainforest remaining in the region lies on the rugged escarpments within the midaltitudinal range, surveys of these areas will provide important information on both undisturbed and mid-altitudinal faunal assemblages.

This paper reports on a fauna survey conducted at the Cannabullen Section of Tully Gorge National Park on the southern slopes of the Atherton Tableland in N Queensland. The section of the national park is comprised largely of Cannabullen Plateau, a mid-elevation (420-480m ASL) unlogged rainforest. The plateau has escaped logging and the associated fragmentation by roads and snig-tracks because deep gorges and rugged terrain surround it. Few fauna surveys have been undertaken in the national parks of the Wet Tropics and none in the vicinity of Cannabullen. As such, this study represents an important addition to the knowledge of vertebrate fauna within the national parks estate. Additionally, the study adds to our knowledge of the vertebrate fauna in mid-elevation unlogged rainforest in the Australian Wet Tropics.

METHODS

Cannabullen Plateau is situated on the southern escarpment of the Atherton Tableland, approximately 15km SE of Ravenshoe (17°42'S 145°37'E). The plateau is relatively flat and consists of approximately 12,500ha of rainforest (mesophyll vine forest) on basaltic soils.

A team of 6 biologists surveyed the vertebrate fauna of the plateau and adjacent Cochable Ck. over 20 days in November 1993. Sampling was conducted at 3 primary sites on the plateau: Site P1 near the southern end, Site P2 in the centre and Site P3 on the northern end of the plateau. Two secondary sites were surveyed on Cochable Ck which defines the western and southern edge of the plateau. Site C1 (third order stream) was situated below the camp at the southern end of the plateau while Site C2 (second order stream) was in the headwaters of Cochable Creek at the northern end of the plateau. Table 1 summarises the exact site localities, altitudes and habitat descriptions for each site. Cannabullen Creek in the gorge on the east of the plateau was only visited once due to the relative inaccessibility of that gorge.

Each plateau sites was sampled using a standardised combination of methods, including mammal trapping, active searches, spotlighting and bird transects. Sampling at the two creek sites consisted of bat mist-netting and frog transects. In addition to the standardised sampling all miscellaneous records were recorded and miscellaneous searches were conducted in any areas or microhabitats not represented in the primary sites, including several nights of bat mist-netting (two nets) at each of the creek sites. Voucher specimens were taken for species where there was any doubt about identification and lodged with the Queensland Museum (specimen numbers QMJ59879-QMJ59901).

Five trapping grids were established at each site (P1, P2 & P3) with at least 200m between adjacent grids. Each grid consisted of 20 small mammal traps (Elliott type A) and 2 wire cage traps (Mascot Wire, 30×30×60cm, folding, treadle type). The traps were set in two parallel lines 10m apart with 10 Elliot traps (5m apart) along each line. The two cage traps were placed between the lines at the second trap in from each end. Traps were baited with a mixture of rolled oats and vanilla essence, and checked and re-baited each morning for four nights at each site. Therefore, a total of 440 trap-nights were conducted at each of the three sites on the plateau. All animals caught were identified, tagged with individually numbered monel metal ears tags, sexed, weighed and released at the trap site.

Standardised spotlighting transects were conducted to sample all nocturnal vertebrate fauna. A single spotlighting transect approximately 1km long was established at each site. Each transect was sampled on three nights. Spotlighting was standardised to reduce biases in a technique which has intrinsic high variability (using methods described in Williams, 1995). Spotlighting was conducted between 1900h and 2400h. We used two 30W hand-held spotlights and binoculars to identify animals on all transects. For each observation of an animal the time, species, position along the transect, estimated distance from the transect, estimated height and the method of detection (call, sight, heard movement) were recorded.

Bird surveys utilising both sightings and calls were conducted over the same transects as the spotlighting transect. Each transect was surveyed three times by the same two people. Each census took between 90 and 120min and was undertaken

Site	AMG	Altitude	Habitat
C1	352400 / 8042200	340	Third order stream; wide canopy break (30m), large boulders, some bedrock, riffles, waterfalls and large pools
C2	351900 / 8043600	410	Second order stream, narrow canopy break (5m), small pools, riffles, small boulders, number of small first order guilies
PI	352600 / 8042300	420	Mixed mesophyll vine forest (type 1a/2a) - heavily cyclone disturbed; dense understorey
P2	352600 / 8042900	460	Mixed mesophyll vine forest (type 1a/2a) - less cyclone damage; patchy dense understorey
P3	352300 / 8043500	490	Mixed mesophyll vine forest (type la/2a) – little cyclone damage; open understorey

TABLE 1. Site localities and habitat descriptions. Vegetation types follow Tracey & Webb (1975).

in the 2h following dawn. Numbers of individual birds were not recorded.

Surveys for stream-dwelling frogs were carried out along the creek at Sites C1 and C2. Each transect consisted of a 200m length of creek and was surveyed three times by two people using spotlights and head torches between 1700h and 2400h. The numbers of individuals were recorded on each survey, except when a large breeding chorus was encountered and abundances were estimated.

Active searches for herpetofauna consisted of two people walking along the standard transects (approximately 10m wide) at each site and recording all individuals that were visible and also by searching actively under logs, bark, leaf litter etc. The 1km transect at each site was surveyed three times, on different days. Searches were not carried out in rain or during times of heavy cloud cover.

RESULTS

A total of 96 species of vertebrates were recorded during the survey comprising 12 mammals, 52 birds, 22 reptiles and 10 frogs (Table 2; see Appendix for relative abundances at each site and current conservation status of each species). Species richness was relatively uniform over the plateau with only minor differences in assemblage structure between the three primary plateau sites (Table 2). The cumulative species curve suggests that the total number of species was plateauing after surveying the 5 sites (Fig. 1). Bootstrap estimates of total species richness suggests that the study area contains approximately 109 species (Fig. 1). Therefore, we estimate that the survey recorded 88% of the total species richness.

Twenty-nine of the observed species or 30% of the total are endemic to the Wet Tropics region. Nearly 41% of these species (39 species) are considered to be very important species (VIS) with respect to the conservation of the world heritage values of the region (Williams et al., 1996; see Table 4 for VIS definition). Eight of these species are currently recognised as being rare, vulnerable or endangered under the Queensland Nature (Wildlife) Regulation (1994) (Table 2).

Five species of birds (Tooth-billed Bowerbird; Bowers Shrike-thrush; Australian Fernwren; Bridled Honeyeater; Atherton Scrubwren) and one gecko (Carphodactylus laevis) were observed well below the altitudinal limits given in Nix & Switzer (1991). All of these 6 species were thought to be restricted to above 600m ASL using recorded point locality data (Crome & Nix, 1991; Covacevieh & McDonald, 1991). However, broad distributional data suggest that four of the bird species are known to occur down to 450m (Gill, 1970) and C. laevis is known to occur down to 300m (Covacevich & McDonald, 1993). Unfortunately, neither of these papers report point localities. Other noteworthy records on Cannabullen Plateau were the relatively high numbers of Musky Rat-kangaroos, Cassowaries and rare and/or endangered frogs. Two species of deelining frogs (Richards et al., 1993) (Litoria nannotis, L. rheocola) were observed in reasonable numbers (Appendix), as were two rare microhylid frogs (Cophixalus infacetus, Sphenophrvne robusta).

Although the vertebrate assemblages were relatively uniform throughout the plateau there were some differences between sites that arc of eeological interest. Two species of mammals (*Melomys cervinipes*, *Uromys caudimaculatus*) and one reptile (*Saproscincus basilisicus*) were more abundant in the southern parts of the plateau, while 3 species of skinks were more abundant in the northern sites (*Carlia rubrigularis*, *Lampropholis coggeri*, *Gnypetoscincus queenslandiae*). The frog assemblages at the two

creek sites (Cochable Ck) were very different, reflecting differences in the microhabitats at each site. Site C1 was characterised by large pools with high flow and rocky substratum, and supported high numbers of stream dwelling hylid frogs (Litoria genimaculata, L. lesueuri, L. *rheocola*, L. *nannotis*) (Appendix). Site C2 was a smaller creek with small pools, fewer boulders and a more closed eanopy. There were only a few individuals of each species of stream-dwelling hylid present at Site C2, however, there was a more diverse complement of microhylid frogs (Cophixalus infacetus, Sphenophryne robusta) than at C1. Water dragons (Physignathous *lesueuri*) were also much more common in the southern, larger section of the creek (Site C1). It was of interest that all sites on the plateau had sympatric populations of both Lewin's Honeyeaters and Yellow-spotted Honeyeaters, two species that are usually thought to be altitudinally allopatric (Longmore, 1991).

DISCUSSION

The species richness of terrestrial vertebrates observed on Cannabullen Plateau may seem low considering that it lies within a region containing approximately 700 species (Williams et al., 1996). However, the plateau is very flat and the vegetation is relatively uniform. A diversity of almost 100 species of vertebrates is high given the lack of coarse habitat heterogeneity. For example, there are no large waterbodies, swamps, rocky outcrops or patches of non-rainforcst vegctation which often increase dramatically the number of species in a given area (Williams et al., 1996).

Since Cannabullen Plateau is entirely rainforest and sufficiently distant from other vegetation types so as not to be influenced by non-rainforest species assemblages, this survey provides an estimate of true local-scale species richness within the rainforest. The cumulative species curve and bootstrap estimate of total species richness both suggest that the survey did record a large portion of the species present. Local-scale species richness is affected by a number of processes including regional species richness, habitat heterogeneity and the movements of individuals from adjoining habitats (mass-effect) (Shinida & Wilson, 1985; Ricklefs & Schluter, 1993). Due to the highly fragmented and often narrow shape of rainforests within the region (Williams & Pearson, 1997), it is difficult to obtain estimates of rainforest species richness which are not

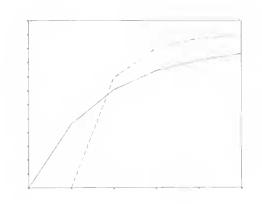


FIG. 1. Mean cumulative species curve for survey sites based on Monte-Carlo simulations of cumulative species counts over the five sites (solid line) and bootstrap estimate of species richness (dashed line). Both estimates are constructed using the mean of 1000 randomised runs using the program 'Species Diversity & Richness' (Henderson & Seaby 1997).

influenced by adjoining habitats or the strong effects of coarse scale habitat heterogeneity (Williams et al., 1996; Williams & Marsh, 1998). This study provides baseline reliable estimates (Fig. 1) of both local and habitat species richness of mid-altitude rainforest without the confounding effects due to coarse habitat heterogeneity and mass-effects from adjoining habitats.

Although local species richness does not vary greatly between the three primary sites on the plateau, there are some subtle, but ecologically significant, differences in the relative abundances of several species (see Appendix). These differences are probably the result of changes in the vegetation structure between the southern and northern ends of the plateau. It is well known that vegetation structure influences the assemblage structure of vertebrates (Southwood, 1996). The southern end of the plateau has been disturbed heavily by cyclones, whereas the northern end is much more protected and has suffered considerably less damage. This has resulted in a gradient in vegetation structure from the southern end which has a more open canopy, very dense middle layer and a dense lower shrub layer to a more closed canopy and much more open shrub and ground layers in the northern end of the plateau. Although these changes are patchy and subtle compared to the overall vegetation structure, they are seemingly significant enough to have influenced the abundances of several

TABLE 2. Summary of species richness at each site for each taxonomic class including: total number of species, number of regionally-endemic species, number of rare, vulnerable and endangered species listed under the Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation (1994) and the number of species of conservation significance to the region (Very Important Species (VIS) are either listed rare, vulnerable or endangered and/or are regionally-endemic species or subspecies — after Williams et al., 1996). n/a = not applicable (no standardised bird surveys at these sites).

			Sites			
	CI	C2	P1	P2	P3	Total
		Mam	mals			
l'otal	4	3	10	10	7	12
Rare, vulnerable & endangered			ł	-	-	1
Regional endemics	1	-	2	1	I	2
VIS	1	2	3	2	1	3
		Bii	ds			
Fotal	n/a	n/a	38	41	42	52
Rare, vulnerable & endangered	n/a	n a	1	1.	1	I
Regional endemics	n/a	n/a	8	9	8	11
· VIS	n/a	n/a	15	16	16	19
		Rep	tiles			
Total	11	9	- 14	7	E.	22
Rare, vulnerable & endangered	-	-	1		1	1
Regional endemics	5	4	8	6	8	9
VIS	5	4	8	6	8	9
		Amph	ibians			
Total	4	9	5	2		10
Rare, vulnerable & endangered	3	5	2	1		5
Regional endemics	2	7	4	1	-	7
VIS	3	8	4	1	-	8
Total number of species	20	21	67	60	60	96

species including some of the small mammals (Melomys cervinipes, Uromys caudimaculatus) and skinks (*Carlia rubrigularis*, *Lampropholis* coggeri, Saproscincus basilisicus, Gnypetoscincus queenslandiae) (Table 2, Appendix). Similarly, there are large differences in the vertebratc assemblages between Sites C1 and C2 due to the large differences in the habitat structure of the creek. The stream-dwelling hylid frogs, water dragons (*Physignathus lesueurii*) and water skinks (Eulamprus quoyii) are much more common in the rocky, higher flow habitat at C1 while microhylids are both more diverse and more abundant in the smaller headwaters at site C2 and at site P1. The known microhabitat preferences (Cogger, 1996) of these fauna reflect the pattern of distribution observed in this survey. For example, amongst the frogs detected, stream- dwelling hylids typically prefer swift-flowing rocky streams, while the microhylid species are usually associated with leaves and other debris on the rainforest floor, especially in moist areas (McDonald, 1992). Estimates of local abundances of birds were not accounted for in this study and, therefore, comparisons of the relative abundances of birds at each site could not be made.

The records of regionally endemic species at considerably lower altitudes than previously recognised are important for interpreting biogeographic patterns across the region. Analyses utilising climatic models (e.g. Nix & Switzer, 1991) arc reliant on a relatively small number of records often biased towards areas of casy access. Eight regionally endemic bird species were previously recognised as being restricted to above 600m (Crome & Nix, 1991), yet this survey recorded five of these eight species at just over 400m. Our data agree with the general statements on bird distributions by Gill (1970) that many of the upland endemics are found at altitudes as low as 340m. The incorporation of these data would influence predicted climatic profiles and distributions for several species and may change the

interpretation of the effects that historical climate fluctuations have had on these species. The lack of comprehensive, region-wide point data remains one of the most significant problems in analyses of vertebrate distributions in the region, especially in areas of difficult access.

Cannabullen Plateau contains many vertebrate species of conservation significance, with 41% of species having a Very-Important-Species (VIS) rating (Williams et al., 1996) and 30% of species being restricted to the Wet Tropics region (Table 2). In particular, there were good populations of two species of declining frogs (*Litoria nannotis*, *L. rheocola*). Upland areas above 600m ASL have always been considered to be the most

significant areas for regionally-endemic vertebrates in the Wet Tropics (Nix & Switzer, 1991). The results of this survey suggest that this significant zone should extend down to at least 400m ASL, similar to the scheme used in Winter et al. (1984). However, the plateau is unusual in that there is a considerable flat area of rainforest on highly fertile basalt at mid-altitudes. There is evidence that foliar nutrients are higher on the more fertile basaltic soils and that this produces differences in the structure of the faunal assemblages between basaltic and granitic soils (J. Kanowski, unpubl. data). Other surveys at mid-altitudes are needed to confirm the generality of these findings. The generality of these results are further limited by being based on a single, albeit comprehensive, survey. Since this national park contains such a large proportion of species of significant conservation value within the Wet Tropies, it represents a significant resource in the management and protection of the biodiversity and wilderness values of the region. The Cannabullen Plateau Section of Tully Gorge National Park, and the adjacent Elizabeth Grant Falls Section are relatively inaccessible at present because of the natural protection afforded by the surrounding LAURANCE, W.F. & LAURANCE, S.G.W. 1996. topography and perhaps it would be best if this isolation were to be actively maintained.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Steve Comport, Jeff Middleton and Stephanie White for their endurance and hard work during the many trials involved in this expedition. We are indebted to the Wet Tropics Management Authority, Australian Geographic, and the Department of Tropical Environmental Studies and Geography (James Cook University) for their generous funding. Thanks are extended to the Queensland Departments of Environment and Natural Resources for permission to undertake the survey. Many thanks to John Winter and Alex Kutt for their suggestions and comments on the manuscript.

LITERATURE CITED

- COGGER, H.G. 1996. Reptiles and amphibians of Australia, 5th Edition. (Reed Books: Sydney).
- COVACEVICH, J. & McDONALD, K. 1991. Reptiles. Pp. 69-103. In Nix, H.A. & Switzer, M.A. (eds) Rainforest animals: atlas of vertebrates endemic to Australia's wet tropics. (Australian National Parks and Wildlife; Canberra).
 - 1993. Distribution and conservation of frogs and reptiles of Queensland rainforests. Memoirs of the Queensland Museum 34: 189-199.

- CROME, F. & NIX, H. 1991. Birds. Pp. 55-68. In Nix, H.A. & Switzer, M.A. (eds) Rainforest animals: atlas of vertebrates endemic to Australia's wet tropics. Australian National Parks and Wildlife, Canberra.
- GILL, H.B. 1970. Birds of Innisfail and hinterland. Emu 70: 105-116.
- HENDERSON, P.A. & SEABY, R.M.H. 1997 Species diversity & richness: a program to calculate and compare species diversity and estimate species richness. (Pisces Conservation: Oxford University, UK).
- KIKKAWA, J. 1982. Ecological associations of birds and vegetation structure in wet tropical forests of Australia. Australian Journal of Ecology 7: 325-345.
- KUTT, A.S., SKULL, S.D. & KEMP, J.E. 1995a. Chalumbin to Woree 275 kV transmission line environmental impact assessment: flora and fauna. Components 1 and 2. Report No. 95/03. (Australian Centre for Tropical Freshwater Research' Townsville).
- KUTT, A.S., SKULL, S.D. BURNETT, S.E. & KEMP, J.E. 1995b, Chalumbin to Woree 275 kV transmission line environmental impact assessment: flora and fauna. Components 3 and 4. Report No. 95/04. (Australian Centre for Tropical Freshwater Research: Townsville).
- Responses of five arboreal marsupials to recent selective logging in tropical Australia. Biotropica 28: 310-322
- LONGMORE, W. & NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX OF AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE, 1991. Honeyeaters and their allies of Australia. (Angus and Robertson: Sydney).
- McDONALD, K.R. 1992. Distribution patterns and conservation status of north Queensland rainforest frogs. Conservation Technical Report No. 1. (Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage: Brisbane).
- NIX, H.A. & SWITZER, M.A. 1991, Rainforest animals: atlas of vertebrates endemic to the wet tropics. (Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service: Canberra).
- PAHL, L.I. WINTER, J.W. & HEINSOHN, G. 1988. Variation in responses of arboreal marsupials to fragmentation of tropical rainforest in north eastern Australia. Biological Conservation 46: 71-82.
- RICHARDS, S.J., McDONALD, K.R. & ALFORD, R.A. 1993. Declines in populations of Australia's endemic tropical rainforest frogs. Pacific Conservation Biology 1: 66-77.
- RICKLEFS, R.E. & SCHLUTER, D. 1993. Species diversity: regional and historical influences. Pp. 350-365. In Ricklefs, R.E. & Schluter, D. (eds) Species diversity in ecological communities, (University of Chicago Press: Chicago).
- SHMIDA, A. & WILSON, M.V. 1985. Biological determinants of species diversity. Journal of Biogeography 12: 1-20.

- SOUTHWOOD, T.R.E. 1996. Natural communities: structure and dynamics. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London 351: 1113-1129.
- WERREN, G. 1993. Conservation strategies for rare and threatened vertebrates of Australia's wet tropics region. Memoirs of the Queensland Museum 34: 229-241.
- WILLIAMS, S.E. 1995. Measuring and monitoring wildlife communities: the problem of bias. Pp. 140-144. In Grigg, G.C., Hale, P.T. & Lunney, D. (eds) Conservation through sustainable use of wildlife. (Centre for Conservation Biology: Brisbane).
 - 1997. Patterns of mammalian species richness in the Australian tropical rainforests: are extinctions during historical contractions of the rainforest the primary determinant of current patterns in biodiversity? Wildlife Research 24: 513-530.
- WILLIAMS S.E. & HERO J-M. 1998. Rainforest frogs of the Australian Wet tropics: guild classification and the ecological similarity of declining species. Proceedings of the Royal Society of London B: 265: 597-602.
- WILLIAMS S.E. & MARSH H. 1998. Changes in small mammal assemblage structure across a rainforest/open forest ecotone. Journal of Tropical Ecology 14: 187-198.
- WILLIAMS, S.E. & PEARSON, R.G. 1997. Rainforest shape and endemism in Australia's Wet Tropics. Proceedings of the Royal Society of London B 264: 709-716.
- WILLIAMS, S., PEARSON, R. & BURNETT, S. 1993. Vertebrate fauna of three mountain tops in the

Townsville region, north Queensland: Mount Clcveland, Mount Elliot and Mount Halifax. Memoirs of the Queensland Museum 33: 379-387.

- WILLIAMS, S. E., PEARSON, R. G. & WALSH, P. J. 1996. Distributions and biodiversity of the terrestrial vertebrates of Australia's Wet Tropics: a review of current knowledge. Pacific Conservation Biology 2: 327-362.
- WINTER, J.W. 1988. Ecological specialization of mammals in Australian tropical and sub-tropical rainforest: refugial or ecological determinism? Pp. 127-138. In Kitching, R. (ed.) The ecology of Australia's wet tropics. (Surrey Beatty & Sons: Sydney).
 - 1997. Responses of non-volant mammals to late quaternary climatic changes in the Wet Tropics region of north-eastern Australia. Wildlife Research 24: 493-511.
- WINTER, J.W, BELL, F.C., PAHL, L.1. & ATHERTON, R.G. 1984. The specific habitats of selected northeastern Australian rainforest mammals. Report to the World Wildlife Fund, Sydney.
 - 1987. Rainforest clearfelling in northeastern Australia. Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland 98: 41-57.
- WINTER, J.W., JENSEN, R. & MARTIN, W. 1992. Resource assessment of Queensland's wet tropics region (southern): terrestrial vertebrates, Paluma gradsect. Report to Wet Tropics Management Authority and Queensland Department of Environment, Cairns.

APPENDIX

List of species recorded during survey; conservation status defined by Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation (1994) (NCR), regional endemics (END) and very important species (V1S) as defined by Williams et al. (1996) as being of significant conservation importance are indicated; overall relative abundance index at Cannabullen Plateau and abundances at each of the sites. Abundances are the total number of individuals observed at each site except for birds where the number represents the number of transects at each site that each species was recorded (max. 3). Abundance index is an estimate of relative abundance for each species on Cannabullen Plateau based on the combination of all methods and sites (Abund. Index): 1 = rare, only observed once or twice during entire survey; 2 = uncommon, observed several times, usually on several transects and sometimes at more than one site; 3 = common, observed on most transects at multiple sites; 4 = abundant, observed on most transects at most sites and usually with multiple numbers of individuals.

12	Species	Common	NCR	END	VIS	Abund.	Sites					
Family						Index	C1	C2	P1	P2	<u>P3</u>	
Dasyuridae	Antechinus flavipes	Yellow-footed Antechinus	_		*	2		1	1	1		
Peramelidae	Perameles nasuta	Long-nosed Bandicoot				3			5	9	5	
Petauridae	Dactylopsila trivirgata	Striped Possum				1			1			
Pseudocheiridae	Pseudocheirops archeri	Green Ringtail Possum	R	*	*	1			1			
Potoroidae	Hypsiprymnodon moschatus	Musky Rat-kangaroo		*	*	4	1		12	6	11	
Macropodidae	Thylogale stigmatica	Red-legged Pademelon				3			2	5	7	
Pteropodidae	Nyctimene robinsoni	Queensland Tube-nosed Bat				3	1		3	3	3	

MEMOIRS OF THE QUEENSLAND MUSEUM

Family	Species	Common	NCR	END	VIS	Abund.			Sites	-	
						Index	C1	C2	Pl	P2	P3
Muridae	Hydromys chrysogaster	Water Rat				1	1	1			
Muridae	Melomys cervinipes	Fawn-footed Melomys				2			7	2	
Muridae	Rattus fuscipes	Bush Rat				4			19	13	21
Muridae	Uromys caudimaculatus	Giant White-tailed Rat				3		1	4	2	2
Suidae	Sus scrofa	Feral Pig				2	1			2	2
Casuariidae	Casuaris casuaris	Southern Cassowary	Е		*	2			1	-	1
Megapodiidae	Alecturi lathami	Australian Brush Turkey				2				2	2
Megapodiidae	Megapodius reinwardt	Orange-footed Scrubfowl				3			3	3	3
Rallidae	Rallina tricolor	Red-necked Crake				1				1	
Columbidae	Chalcophaps indica	Emerald Dove				1				1	
Columbidae	Lopholaimus antarcticus	Topknot Pigeon				2	3		1		
Columbidae	Macropygia amboinensis	Brown Cuckoo-Dove				3			3	3	3
Columbidae	Ptilinopus magnificus	Wompoo Fruit-Dove				3			3	3	3
Columbidae	Ptilinopus regina	Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove				2			1	1	1
Columbidae	Ptilinopus superbus	Superb Fruit-Dove				3			3	3	3
Cacatuidae	Cacatua galerita	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo				3			3	2	3
Psittacidae	Alisteris scapularis	Australian King Parrot			*	3			2	1	2
Psittacidae	Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus	Scaly-breasted Lorikeet				3			2	3	2
Psittacidae	Trichoglossus haematodus	Rainbow Lorikeet				3			3	2	3
Cuculidae	Cacomantis flabelliformis	Fan-tailed Cuckoo				1				_	1
Cuculidae	Eudynamys scolopacea	Common Koel				2			1		
Tytonidae	Tyto multipunctata	Lesser Sooty Owl		*	*	1			1		
Strigidae	Ninox novaseelandiae	Southern Boobook			*	2			2	1	1
Alcedinidae	Alcedo pusilla	Little Kingfisher				1					1
Halcyonidae	Dacelo novaeguineae	Laughing Kookaburra				2			3	1	1
Pittidae	Pitta versicolor	Noisy Pitta				2		_	1	1	1
Campephagidae	Coracina lineata	Barred Cuckoo-Shrike				2			_		3
Campephagidae	Lalage leucomela	Varied Triller				3			2	3	3
Orthonychidae	Orthonyx spaldingii	Chowchilla	1.000	*	*	3			2	2	3
Cinclosomatidae	Psophodes olivaceus	Eastern Whipbird			*	3			3	2	3
Pardalotidae	Gerygone mouki	Brown Gerygone			*	4			3	3	2
Pardalotidae	Oreoscopus gutteralis	Fernwren		*	*	1				1	
Pardalotidae	Sericornis keri	Atherton Scrubwren		*	*	1				1	
Pardalotidae	Sericornis magnirostris	Large-billed Scrubwren				2			1	2	-
Dicruridae	Arses kaupi	Pied Monarch		*	sk	1			1		
Dicruridae	Machaerirhynchus	Yellow-breasted Boatbill			*	*				1	
Dicruridae	Monarcha melanopsis	Black-faced Monarch				2			*		
Dicruridae	Monarcha trivirgatus	Spectacled Monarch				3			2	2	1
Petroicidae	Heteromyias albispecularis	Grey-headed Robin		*	*	4			3	3	

VERTEBRATES OF CANNABULLEN PLATEAU

Family	Species	Common	NCR	END	V1S	Abund.						
						1ndex	C1	C2	P1	P2	P3	
Petroicidae	Tregellasia capito	Pale-yellow Robin			*	3			1	3	1	
Pachycephalidae	Colluricincla boweri	Bowers Shrike-Thrush		*	*	2				1	2	
Pachycephalidae	Colluricincla megarhyncha	Little Shrike-Thrush				4			3	3	3	
Pachycephalidae	Pachycephala pectoralis	Golden Whistler				1				1	l	
Pachycephalidae	Pachycephala simplex	Grey Whistler			-	3			1	2	3	
Climacteridae	Cormobates leucophaeus	White-throated Treecreeper				3			2	2	3	
Dicaeidae	Dicaeum hirundinaceum	Mistletoebird				1				1		
Zosteropidae	Zosterops lateralis	Silvereye				1					1	
Meliphagidae	Lichenostomus frenatus	Bridled Honeyeater		*	*	4	1		3	3	3	
Meliphagidae	Meliphaga lewinii	Lewin's Honeyeater				3			2	3	3	
Meliphagidae	Meliphaga notata	Yellow-spotted Honeyeater				3			2	3	2	
Meliphagidae	Myzomela obscura	Dusky Honeyeater				2			1	1	1	
Meliphagidae	Xanthotis macleayana	Macleay's Honeyeater		*	*	3			2	3	3	
Sturnidae	Aplonis metallica	Metallic starling				2	10+					
Artamidae	Strepera graculina	Pied Currawong				2			2	1		
Ptilono r hynchi dac	Ailuroedus melanotis	Spotted Catbird			*	3			2	3	3	
Ptilonorhynchi dae	Scenopocetes dentirostris	Tooth-billed Bowerbird		γc	γk	3			1	3	2	
Paradisaeidae	Ptiloris victoriae	Victoria's Riflebird		*	*	3			3	3	3	
Chelidae	Elseya latisternum	Sawshell Tortoise	-			3	3	3			Ţ	
Gekkonidae	Carphodactylus	Chameleon Gecko		*	*	1	5		1	-		
Gekkonidae	laevis Saltuarius cornutus	Northern Leaf-tailed Gecko		*	*					1	1	
Scincidae	Carlia rubrigularis	Northern Red-throated Skink		νje	*	4	6	3	3	11	1:	
Scincidae	Egernia frerei	Major Skink			-	1			1			
Scincidae	Eulamprus quoyii	Eastern Water Skink		_		3	2	2				
Scincidae	Eulamprus tigrinus		R	*	əje	2			1		3	
Scincidae	Gnypetoscincus queenslandiae	Prickly Forest Skink		*	*	4	1	1	3	8	2	
Scincidae	Lampropholis coggeri			η¢	*	3	1		5	5	13	
Scincidae	Saproscincus basiliscus			9k	*	4	1	1	16	18	1	
Scincidae	Saproscincus teiradactyla	Four-toed Litter Skink		*	*	3	1	1	3	1	5	
Agamidae	Hypsilurus boydii	Boyd's Forest Dragon		*	*	1			1		1	
Agamidae	Physignathus lesueurii	Eastern Water Dragon				4	31	4				
Varanidae	Varanus scalaris		1	-		1			1		1	
Typhlopidae	Ramphotyphlops polygramnicus					1			1			
Boidae	Morelia amethestina	Amethystine Python				1			2			
Boidae	Morelia spilota	Carpet Python				2			1		2	
Colubridae	Dendrelaphis calligastra	Northern Tree Snake				1			1			
Colubridae	Dendrolaphis punctulata	Common Tree Snake				2	1	1				

MEMOIRS OF THE QUEENSLAND MUSEUM

			NOR		NUC	Abund. 1 2 2 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 2	Sites					
Family	Species	Common	NCR	END	VIS		C1	C2	P1	P2	P3	
Colubridae	Tropidonophis mairii	Keelback				1	1		-			
Elapidae	Pseudechis porphyriacus	Red-bellied Black Snake				2	1	1	-1			
Elapidae	Rhinoplocephalus nigrescens	Eastern Smalleyed Snake				2				1	1	
											_	
Bufonidae	Bufo marinus	Cane Toad				2				3		
Hylidae	Litoria genimaculata	Green-eyed Treefrog	R		*	3	31	1				
Hylidae	Litoria lesueuri	Stony-creek Frog				3	23	1	2			
Hylidae	Litoria nannotis	Waterfall Frog	Е	*	*	3	16	5				
Hylidae	Litoria rheocola	Common Mistfrog	E	*	*	3	50+	2				
Microhylidae	Cophixalus infacetus	Buzzing Nursery-Frog	R	*	*	2		4	1			
Microhylidae	Cophixalus ornatus	Common Nursery-Frog		*	*	3		2	2			
Microhylidae	Sphenophryne pluvialis	White-browed Chirper		*	*	2		2	1			
Microhylidae	Sphenophryne robusta	Pealing Chirper	R	*	*	2		1	1	1		
Myobatrachidae	Mixophyes schevilli	Northern Barred-Frog		*	*	1		1				